

## IN A CROOKED GAME

"A good many people seem to think," said the gray-haired, young-looking man in the club smoking room, "that if a man goes up against a crooked gambler and plays his money in he is necessarily going to lose it, but it isn't so."

"One very easy way of winning against a crooked game of faro occurred to me when I was a young fellow in Chicago. I had been playing faro more than was good for me for quite a while, and was fairly infatuated with the game before I went to Chicago."

"I had learned something about it, too, and it didn't take me long to make up my mind that there wasn't a single gambling house among all those that I came to know in which I could expect a square deal if I played faro there."

"It was strange that I should have played at all, holding that opinion; but I was young and I was infatuated with the game. I was foolish enough to think I might have luck or that some miracle would happen, and rather than not play I used to go around once in a while and blow in a few dollars."

"One night I wanted \$50 very badly and all I had was \$10. The foolish familiar old thought came to me that the ten was of no use, and that was followed by the equally foolish notion of playing for some stroke of luck which would win me the \$50."

"At all events, I made it an excuse to play, and went to a joint where I had played before and bought a stack of chips."

"Before I began to play I noticed that a big fellow whom I hadn't seen before was playing with yellow chips, each one of which was worth \$10, and that he was betting five or ten of them at once on the same card, never making more than the one bet on a turn, but betting fifty or a hundred each time. As I sat waiting for a new deal I had a sudden thought."

"It was not my habit to begin in the middle of a deal, so no one paid any attention to my sitting idle, especially as there was plenty of room at the table, only four or five players being there. Then they had me sized up for a piker and they didn't notice me much, anyhow."

### On the Pike Method.

"My thought was that the big man, being a wide-open player (with stacks of money, was going to lose it all, if there was skill enough across the table to make the cards run against him, and I had no doubt in my mind that there was skill a-plenty. So I reasoned that if I could copper a few of the big man's bets without attracting attention I could win out the fifty easily enough."

"I piked along as usual, 50 cents on a turn, till I had lost a couple of dollars, and then with an impatient gesture I slammed down my chips on the table alongside the big man's bet of a hundred on the queen to win. The queen lost."

"Then I went back to 50-cent bets again for a while and lost, but as I happened to win one or two I still had about twelve left, and I coppered another of his bets with my whole pile, and I won again."

"I noticed that the big man's face wrinkled as he saw a slice taken off his stack to pay me, and I knew I could not do the same trick more than once more without having words at least. I waited till the last instant, as the dealer was about to pull a card, and once more put up my pile with a copper in the same card the big man was playing with."

"He began to swear and the dealer looked mighty black, but I cashed in and left the place. It didn't seem to me it would be healthy around there for a little while."

"That's the way, and an easy one if you play it right, to beat a crooked game, but there are others. If you know a game is really crooked, the thing to do is to find out just what the dealer is trying to do and how he does it. Then, if you watch until you are certain of what he expects you to do, and do the opposite, and do it sudden and hard, before he has a chance to kick, you'll be pretty likely to catch him."

"I reckon, perhaps, draw poker is the game in which it is the hardest of all to turn a trick like that, but it can be done."

"Once in a while there will come along a man who has studied the thing for fun as carefully as the professionals study it for business. And if a man like that sits in with a party of professionals there's likely to be something doing."

### Doc Allen of Cleveland.

"I had a friend they called Doc Allen, in Cleveland once. He was a high roller and got me into mischief more than once. He told me to Detroit one Saturday, just because he heard there was some high play going on there, and he said he felt as if his time had come for a little excitement."

"We found the game going on all right, in a gambling house not far from the center of town, and after a little difficulty we got admission to the house. We played faro for a little while, but Doc, indifferent to the game, stretched himself suddenly with a mighty yawn and asked if there wasn't some poker going on, and they told him there was, and took us to the poker room, for I went along though I hadn't the faintest intention of playing."

"He asked for a hand and they took him in, while I sat well to the rear behind him, so that I could not be suspected of signaling to him or of overlooking anybody's hand. I noticed that he was watched closely by the other men, but nobody made any objection and I stayed. Of course, I could not see all that happened, but I saw the betting, and Doc told me about the cards afterward."

"They played along smoothly enough with no remarkable happening for perhaps twenty minutes, when I noticed that Doc had opened a jackpot and two other men had stayed when a big man they called Strong had raised it. The next two passes there were six in the game—and Doc looked at his cards carefully before playing further."

"Of course, I couldn't tell whether he was thinking of laying down, or of raising back, but he came in without raising. The next man laid down, and the next, whom they called Bill, raised back. There was something like a hundred dollars in the pot when it came to him, and he raised to fifty."

"It was on his deal and from what had happened it was plain that Strong, having first said, had passed for the chance of raising, and that Bill on the first round had not cared to disclose his strength. But one of three things was certain."

### A Study For Doc.

"The two were playing together against Doc, or they both had strong hands, or one of the other of them was bluffing or taking long chances on an incomplete hand. There was no way of determining which of these things was true; but it came to me like a flash that Bill had given Doc a strong hand and that he and Strong were going to raise him out on it, or at least try to do so."

"Doc told me afterward that that was exactly what he thought and that he had a jack full in his hand before the draw. He had not raised back on the second round because he wanted to see what the others would do before disclosing his own strength, but when he saw the double raise he felt that his jack full was no good."

"Still, he did not raise again, after Strong had seen Bill's fifty and made fifty more to play. He studied again,

and finally put up his hundred. He told me he had made up his mind to get as much excitement out of that hand as he could, and he would have stayed if there had been half a dozen more raises."

"As it was, there were no more bets the draw, Bill, for some reason or another, perhaps to give Doc more confidence, simply made good on Strong's second raise, and picked up the deck to serve the draw."

"Strong said he reckoned he didn't need any, and Doc took one card, holding my suspicions, I was looking at the dealer, and I was satisfied that he was surprised."

"If he had dealt crooked, as I believe he had, he must, of course, have thought that he had made a mistake, and the only thing he could think when Doc called for one was that he had given him two pairs missing the third jack in some way. However, he could not do anything else but give him the one. Then he took two himself."

"Doc bet a white chip, and Bill, without looking at his draw, covered it. Then Strong bet a hundred, and Doc, whose one card still lay face down in front of him, covered that. Bill then looked at his two and smiled, after which he raised it a hundred."

"Then Strong raised it another hundred, and Doc looked at his draw. He appeared to be thinking pretty hard for a few moments and then very slowly put in \$200."

### The Exciting Moment.

"It made me nervous, for I was sure Bill was going to raise again, which he did, and that Strong was going

## CRIMINALS BY IMPULSE

On a trail between New York and Philadelphia the other day Robert Pinkerton, the famous detective, in conversation with some friends, talked interestingly of a class of persons whom he called "criminals by impulse."

"I've known a lot of folks with floppy, like fingered ears, but eyes who never did an ornerly, much less a criminal, act in their lives, although you'd never get subscribers to the Lombroso-Nodau, head-measuring-as-a-guide-to-crime idea to believe it," he said. "I've met up with philanthropists who were shift-eyed, sneaky-looking and possessed of any number of the physical points of the Lombroso and Nordau so-called type of degenerate, and yet they were men who found it hard to get to sleep at night for thinking of the misery in the world and trying to think out plans to make people unhappy. On the other hand, I've seen in contact with case-hardened desperadoes, crooks of both sexes, crazy ones that enjoyed the very taste and smell of devilry, criminals born, who didn't have a sign of degeneracy, but who felt that wasn't the mark of a thoroughbred, and who could give as wise a gaze out of their eyes and stake you to as appealing a line of argument as a case-hardened promoter of salted mines, endeavoring to sell you a hole in the ground at 20 cents the share that is going to be listed at \$4 a share on April the first."

All of the unfortunate ones, occupying prison cells are not criminals by impulse. It would help some if, today, I had a dollar for every branded one I knew who, from a life of utter squareness, had been turned into a criminal by hopping a trolley by succumbing to quick and overwhelming temptation."

"Only a few years ago a New York messenger made a short railroad sprint with \$18,000, after having had ten thousand opportunities to jump with ten times that much, and after a lifetime of the most scrupulous honesty, he succumbed to the temptation of one of these queer impulses to get away with a quick grab."

"The newspapers had it that he was just a plain thief, that he had been caught with all of the goods, that he had been tried and sentenced to five years, and that's all. But these spread-out recitals of the case didn't really cover the nub of the story at all."

"That bank messenger had been employed by the bank for twenty-two years, and he was twenty-eight when his evil moment sped along and gathered him in. He was unmarried, lived with a married sister, whom he supported, and who, to be sure, had no particular vices except the consolation of a corned pipe when he got through with his day's work."

"In the course of his twenty-two years with the bank he had handled tens of millions of dollars, with opportunities to get away with enormous bundles as good as those he had accepted, suddenly in hopping with the \$18,000. On the very day before he took the \$18,000 safehold he had been the custodian of a valise containing \$120,000 of the bank's currency—but the minute for him had come."

"But he executed the runaway with the \$18,000, all right enough, knowing, too, that it was only \$18,000. He got as far as Pittsburgh, when he went all of a sudden, and he took a train back for New York to confess to the bank people and turn over the \$18,000 intact."

"He was traced to Pittsburgh and then on to the other train he had taken to make New York again, and he was corralled on that train at Altoona. There's no letup in some of these bank people, and the messenger got his five years, although he surrendered every tip of the \$18,000."

"I had a bit of a talk with him before he was taken to the pen. Said I to him:

"—Now how came you to squeeze such a little parcel of it, when you could have waited a few days for a whole heap bigger package and have laid better plans, too, for making a get-away that would stick?"

"Well, he replied with perfect candor, 'I never meant to lift that bundle or any other up to the very second that I did it. The hunch to take a run for it hit me squarely as a slant of wind kicking a centaur into a turtle before I could get a clutch on myself.'"

"It was one of those bitter, sleety December days, with gray skies and all that. I got on the 'L' train at Rectory street to take the \$18,000 to the branch bank uptown. I was chilled through, after leaving the warm bank, and shuddering with the nip of the air. I poked the grip containing the money between my legs, and spread out an evening newspaper that I bought to read on the way. In the newspaper I found to reading a mighty dreary and inviting article about the countries where it's warm and balmy during our winter months up here. My teeth, as I say, were chattering with the cold, and I was kind of run down in health, anyhow, and as I read that stuff about the balmy lands down closer to the liner I found myself repeating, over and over again: 'Great Scott! what wouldn't I give to be in one of those places right this minute!'"

"Then I got to looking up at the advertisements in the 'L' car. The one that hit my eye particularly was an ad. for a railroad ticket to Colorado and California, with pictures of Colorado mountains and California palms and all that, and a lot of stuff about 'the sunshine country' and 'the sunnier land' and this, that and the other of that sort."

"I found it hard to take my eye off of that advertising placard, and I guess the idea of making the jump must have sifted into my mind right then and there. But I wouldn't say it was yet. Well, when I got off at Twenty-third street, there was a big tourist party standing across the way on the downtown platform—well-dressed, clipper-built, sassy-looking fellows and looking women in long traveling coats and with fluttering tourists' veils and all that. I stopped and looked over the way at 'em, sort of fascinated, and then it suddenly popped into my head, 'I don't know why, but those people were going to California.'"

"Then the idea for making a run for it struck me with the force of a steam mallet."

"—'Me too for California!' I got to saying through my chattering teeth. 'I'm a-going!'"

"When are you going?" a little persuasive-looking fellow somewhere inside of my head asked me."

"—'Now—now—I'm a-going now!' I answered back to that little voice, and, so that people on the platform turned and gazed at me as I started to do at people they overheard talking to themselves."

"And that's all there was to it. I went. I crossed over to the downtown platform, went down to the ferry station, jumped over to Jersey City, perfectly satisfied with myself and gloat-

back at him with a hundred more, which he did also. What I was not expecting was to see Doc pull out his wallet and count out \$1,300. Putting that in the pot, he said: 'I raise you a thousand.'"

"Then it was Bill's turn to study, and he did it for a long time, but finally he raised it a thousand. He must have thought that Doc had made a full drawing to his two pairs, and counted on his four eights being good. 'Strong laid down, so I never knew what he held, but I always believed he was playing on signal from Bill. If he was, he had done his part well.'"

"Then Doc called. He told me afterward that when he caught the fourth jack on his draw he recognized the fact that it was an accident, as the dealer could not expect him to split a full, and that he was taking chances on Bill's having taken four smaller cards than jacks. He was morally certain there were four against him, but there would be only three hands to beat his as against nine smaller hands. As it was, the dealer, believing he knew that the deal was crooked, he felt that he played far enough."

"And after he had taken the pot he cashed in and quit. He had had his excitement and he had outplayed the crooks and was satisfied."

"It doesn't always follow that when two men are playing and one is honest and the other a crook, the crook will always get the money. Nevertheless, I am bound to admit that an outsider who may be looking on at such a game will do better, as a general thing, to bet on the crook."—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

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A man who is nervous, whose brain and body are weak, who sleeps badly, awakes more tired than when he went to bed, who is easily discouraged, inclined to brood over imaginary troubles, who has lost ambition and energy to tackle hard problems, lacks the animal electricity which the Dr. McLaughlin Electric Belt supplies.

The whole force of vitality in your body is dependent upon your animal electricity. When you lose that by draining the system in any manner my Belt will replace it and will cure you.

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Letters like that tell a story which means a great deal to a sufferer. They are a beacon light to the man who has become discouraged from useless doctoring. I get such letters every day.

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Give me a man with pains in his back, a dull ache in his muscles or joints, "come-and-go" pains in his shoulders, chest and side, Sciatica in his hip, Lumbago, Rheumatism, or any ache or pain, and my Belt will pour the oil of life into his aching body and drive out every sign of pain. No pain can exist where my Belt is worn.

My husband has been very tardy in writing to you, but as he is away from home a great deal and has very little time, he asked me to write a line to you to tell you that he has received a world of good from your electric Belt. I have also, I had rheumatism in my ankle so bad that I could scarcely walk. I put the Belt on one night and the next morning I didn't know I had any rheumatism. We would not part with the Belt if we could not get another.

Yours very truly,  
"Gilmore, Ida."

And these "old" men, these men who have burned the candle at both ends—or even if they haven't—these men who for one reason or another feel that life has lost its spice, that they are getting old too fast, I can make them feel the sparkle and fire of youth again.

I'll never forget when Mr. A. Crawford of Pocatango, Ore., an old man of 70, wrote to me and said: "When I wrote to you last I told you to send me a Belt to make an old man young, and you did. I am 70 years old, and since I have worn the Belt I feel as strong as I did at 35, and can do as good a day's work as I could at that age." It was two years ago that Mr. Crawford wrote me that letter. Here is one I just got from him.

"In reply to your letter I am glad to say that I am just as much in favor of your Belt as I ever was, for it has been a remarkable help to me. I am 72 years old, but I do not look any more than 50. Am enjoying perfect health, and will continue to recommend the Belt, as I have been doing right along, as I realize that but for it I should have been dead and buried by this time."

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